PRODIGIES & Apparitions
or
England's Warning Piece:
Being a Seasonable Description
by lively figures & aptly
many remarkable & prodigious
fore-runners & apparent Pre-
dictions of Gods Wrath against
England, if not timely prevented
by true Repentance.
Written by J. V.
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BRITISH MUSEUM

PRODIGIES and APPARITIONS, Or, ENGLANDS *Warning-Pieces.*

HIstories doe report and make mention of *Tamberlane*, that famous Warriour, and great scourge of the Turke, (as he was termed) that in his battels, especially in his intended siege and assault of a City or Towne, his custome was, first, to hang out a white flag or banner, in the sight of the Befieged; thereby intimating to them his tender of mercy and favourable quarter to them, if they would instantly yeeld and submit to his mercy. But if that would not serve, but that they resolved to stand it out against him, and put it to the hazard of warre; then hee hung out a red flag, in token, that now there

Tamberlaine the Scourge of the Turk.

A white flag.

A Red flag.

there was nothing but death and deſtruction to be expected upon their refuſall of his profered favor and mercy to them. Even ſo Almighty God, the great and ſupreme Sovereigne of all Nations and Kingdomes, and the moſt terrible heart-tamer and wonder-working-King of all Kings, who with the word of his mouth and breath of his noſtrils, is able to ſubdue the mightieſt Kings, Kingdoms and people, and to caſt down al ſtrong holds and mightieſt mountaines before him, as thoſe Heathen Kings, *Nebuchadnezar* and King *Darius* freely confeſſed. Yet, I ſay, though he be ſo mighty and terrible a God, when hee is provoked to wrath by the ſinnes and tranſgreſſions of a nation or people, he never puniſheth, but he firſt admoniſheth; and heerin like this foreſaid *Tamberlane*, before hee intends the ruine of a Nation or a Kingdome, he firſt holds out the white flag of his profered grace and mercy, on

Dan. 3. 26. and 6. 26. 27.

Gods White-flag of mercy.

on their true repentance and hearty reformation from their evill courſes and converſation, but if this will not worke kindly on them, but they wil obſtinately and ſtubbornly ſtand out and refuſe his mercy and proffered grace and favour, then at laſt, he hangs out his red-flag of wrath and confuſion and ſodainly conſumes his proud and rebellious oppoſers, all inſolent and incorrigible ſinners, who have thus made themſelves uncapable of mercy and compaſſion, and are ſo become as combuſtible ſtubble in the preſence of a terrible and angry God, who as a conſuming fire, devoures them, as in a moment. For, as the Prophet ſayes, who is able to ſtand before, or to dwell with everlaſting burnings? Now, this mercifull courſe of our mercifull God in thus hanging out firſt this white-flag of favour and mercifull premonitions (which is the thing mainly intended to be deſcribed in theſe following figures

Gods Red-flag of wrath and confuſion.

Heb. 12. 29.

Eſay. 33. 14.

and ocular-Emblemes of prodigious portentious, and apparitions) before he inflicteth severe punishments on his sinning Servants: The Lord useth to manifest unto them divers waies, but most especially and most remarkably, these two waies. Either by his Prophets and faithfull Preachers, declaring his word and will to his people; as *Ionas* in Ninevie, and all the Prophets else to the people of Israel, in their constant proclaiming mercy to Penitents, but judgement and wrath to obstinate sinners and refractorie transgressours: Or else, by sending prodigious signes and wonders among them, either by fearfull apparitions in the ayre, monstrous births, heart-frighting-voyces and exclamations, oftimes unknowne from whence or by whome uttered, and such like. And this last course, the Lord hath also frequently taken, with a provoking and impenitent people in all ages and times. And this is the thing which in this

2 Sorts of Gods Whiteflaggs.

1. The word preached.

2. Signes and wonders and Apparitions.

this little Treatiſe is mainly intended to be declared and inſiſted upon.

Namely, to ſhew, that even of late alſo, in theſe our modern times (as well as in former and ancient ages) we, being by our ſins and tranſgreſſions, a greatly provoking people, incenſing and exaſperating the high indignation and wrath of the Lord againſt us; yet he hath among us alſo ſhewn himſelf to bee God that changeth not, full of compaſſion and ſlow to wrath; bending his bow, whetting his ſword, holding up his arm, ready to let it down, yet loath to ſtrike, that ſo by theſe preparations to the blow before it falls heavie upon us, we might ſee and ſhun and avoid it by our true and cordiall repentance. Now in the firſt place, I ſhall very briefly give you a taſte and ſight of what God hath done in this nature and kinde in former ages and times, and ſo paſſe on ſuccindly to our

Pſal. 7, 12, 13.

owne times, which I say is here mainly intended.

A Jove omne principium. Heb. 12, 2.

And, first, to begin with him who is the beginning and end of all things, even the Lord Jesus Christ, our most pretious and deare Saviour, the authour and finisher of our faith, that glorious Lord of life, and Prince of peace; who being born into the world in the dayes of an Emperour of peace, *Augustus Cæsar*, then Emperour of Rome, yet bringing into the world not onely peace, but a sword also; peace to penitent and broken-hearted beleevers, and a sword of variance and revenge to proud and impenitent sinners: Therefore at his birth, what a most admirable and unparalel'd Starre was seen in the East? so great and so miraculous a Starre as hath puzled and posed the greatest and most learned Astronomers and Mathematicians of the world. A white Flag of mercy indeed, yea of everlasting redemption from Sin, Death and Hell, if graci-

Mat. 10, 34. 35.

The admirable Star in the East, seen at Christs birth.

A white Flag. Joh. 3, 16.

graciously accepted with firm faith, and sound universall obedience. But a red Flag of wrath and confusion; yea of horror and perdition, if obstinately rejected, or lazily neglected by sin, and ignorance, and infidelity. Again, a little before the destruction of that great and most magnificent Metropolis of the whole world, Jerusalem, I mean; what fearfull and prodigious fore-warnings were sent to that Citie, to foreshew them the wrath to come? As, first, a fearfull blindnesse and stupidity of minde, or hardnesse of heart (the most fearfull fore-runner of wrath toward them, of all the rest) not to see or beleeve those wonderfull fore-warnings, which God then sent among them. Secondly, a Comet, like a sword, and a bright shining light, in their Temple, round about their Altar, in the midst of the night. Thirdly, a Cow, (which should have, then, been sacrificed) that brought forth a Lamb, in

A red Flag. Heb. 2, 2, 3.

Jerusalem

1. Blindnesse of minde.

2. A Comet like a sword.

3. A Cow which brought forth a Lamb.

4. The Brass gate of the temple opened of it selfe.

in the midst of the Temple. Fourthly, the great and massie brasen gate of the Temple, which opened of it self. Fiftly, fearfull and hideous sights and apparitions in the aire, of mighty companies of Chariots and armed men in an hostile manner. Sixtly and lastly, a voyce was heard in the Temple crying out, *Let us goe hence*. With other such like, mentioned by *Iosephus* in his famous history of the Jewes, page 738.

5. Armed men and chariots in the aire.

6. A voice in the Temple.

But, to come neerer to our own times. Are not the fearfull apparitions and signes in the heavens, and prodigies on the earth, often seen in Germany, by the inhabitants thereof in many places, notable fore-runners and predictions of Germanies succeeding miserie, still fresh in the memory of many yet living? who have been both eye and eare witnesses of the manifold and most lamentable distresses and destructions which have befallen, and, even to this day, lye still very heavy on that (once) most

Germany.

moſt famous and flouriſhing Eden of the whole Chriſtian world, now, made a deſolate deſart, and bare and barren wilderneſſe. Germany the Eden of Europe

But, all this while, that we have only heard that our neighbours houſes have been ſo fearfully on fire; what uſe have we of England made thereof? How have we endevoured to keep the flame off from our own houſes and habitations? Certainly, wee have not made that holy and humbling uſe thereof as we might and ought to have done, conſidering our meanes of grace and reconciliation, wherewith we have been, even lifted up (like Capernaum) to heaven; far beyond our neighbours round about us. We have not been wiſe by other mens harmes, as meer humane and worldly wiſedome might have taught us to be: But have, contrariwiſe, drunk wine in bowles, as the Prophet complaines, and ſtretched our ſelves on our beds of Ivory, none of us hardly being Mat. 11. 23 England like Capernaum. Amos, 6. 6.

being grieved for the afflictions of *Ioseph*, in the aforesaid Germany, and now also of late and lamentably bleeding *Ireland*. Wherefore the Lord hath (and that most justly) come neerer home to our owne doores, and begunne to make us (who were only supine spectators of others miseries) now, unhappy spectacles to others of imbred and homebred devouring destructions.

Nor yet, I say, in all these our selfe-procured sorrowes, can we justly taxe the Lord in the least measure, with any more harsh or hasty proceedings heerein, with us, then with any of his other servants in by-past times, but have been, every-way wholy left without excuse. For, hath not the Lord for these many yeares together both called upon us by by his faithfull and painfull Preachers of the word fore-warned us to flie from the wrath to come? Have they not frequently and fervently cried out and told us, that except we repent we also should perish?

England left without Excuse.

1. Ministers to admonish us.

Luk. 1. 33.

periſh? Yea, when *this one* great and maine meanes of reclaiming us his people from our ſinnes, would not ſerve, hath not the Lord uſed *that other* more terrible and heart-frighting courſe(heer, mainly intended in this treatiſe) of Prodigies, Signes and Apparitions in the ayre, and other moſt degenerating, unnaturall and wonder-ſtriking contingents amongſt us here at home? As now I intend more exactly and particularly to ſet forth and ſhew to the Reader whereby wee ſhall eaſily diſcerne and diſcover to our owne hearts (if we will not bee too wilfully blind, which as I ſhewed before, was the firſt and worſt ſigne of ſmart and ſorrow in Jeruſalem, and more then marble-hearted) moſt apparent prints and even viſible foot-ſteps and impreſſions of Gods highly conceived indignation and provoked patience, turned into enforced furie by our conſtant and unconſcionable ſinning againſt him, and now reſolved to execute

2. Prodigies to fear & fright us.

cute the utmoſt ſeveritie of his wrath upon us, if now at laſt wee haſten not moſt heartily to prevent and divert it, by true and timely repentance and reformation.

And now, I ſay, that we may no longer looke abroad into forreigne parts, nor many yeeres paſt, for examples of this ſort, I ſhall deſire the Reader to remember what yet may be freſh in memory among us: That in the Reigne of King *Iames*, that ſo peacefull a Prince, who ſo much delighted in the name and worke of Peace, both at home and abroad, that hee had this Motto given to him, *Beati Pacifici*, Bleſſed are the Peace-makers. And ſo ſucceſſefully had he proſecuted his affections therin, that (as heere you may ſee in this Emblem, or following Figure) Every man ſate under his owne Vine, and under his owne figge tree, even from Dan to Beerſheba, all the dayes of the ſayd King *Iames*, our ſo peacefull King; as it

An Introduction to the firſt Embleme or Apparition.

Every man Sitting under his vine & under his owne figtree, enjoyng all good things, in the days of King James. But, on the 11th of November 1618. A great Blazing-starr, with 7 long streamers appeared, much damping mens hearts.

HEre, every one ſits under his owne Vine,
All, under their-own Figtrees ſup and dine,
In Pleaſures, Treaſures, and all joyes encreaſe,
In pleaſant Plentie, amiable Peace.
But, whiles this Peace and Plentie brings forth Pride,
Luxurie, Looſnes, and all ſinnes beſides;
Gods wrath is kindled, Heav'n therwith offended,
Lets England ſee his judgements ſore, intended.
By a ſtrange Blazing-ſtarre, which every day,
Betimes ith' morning did bright beames diſplay;
Which, as a Warning-piece, the Lord thus ſent
To rouze-up England, timely, to repent,
And to prevent his judgements, thus, foreſhown,
Leſt (ſtill) ſecure England be overthrown.
See, here, th' indulgence of a gratious God,
Who, ere he ſtrikes, firſt, ſhewes and ſhakes his Rod.

was ſaid of King *Salomon* alſo, that Prince of Peace. But this peace, being but a meer externall and ſenſuall peace, and ſo the mother of Luxury, Libertiniſme and prophaneneſſe (whereof the whole Kingdome did then, and ſo all along, to this very day) too riſely and rankly abound, together with all kind of ſinfulneſſe; Piety being then turned into Court-Policy, and ſincerity into outſide and Diabolicall hypocriſie. The Lord therefore, even about the yeere 1618. *November* 18. ſent a viſible demonſtration of his juſt wrath and diſpleaſure; namely, a great Comet or Blazing Star (as there alſo you have it in the Embleme) with ſeven ſtreames, which continued to the 16. of *Decemb.* following, riſing every morning about three or foure of the clocke, and ſo continued ſhining moſt cleerly and bright, till day light appeared, the ſtreames of it blazing upwards. Now what this Comet or Blazing Star might portend

1 Kings 4.25.

A Comet or blazing Star.

and prognoſticate, hath been evidently ſeene and known amongſt us, by reall and ſenſible experience, ever ſince; not only over all Chriſtendome in generall, as in Germany, Rochel in France, and ſtill freſh bleeding and lamentably dilacerated and forlorne Ireland; but even within our owne boſomes in England alſo, as in the death of Queene *Anne*, and of King *Iames* alſo himſelfe, not long after; yea and many moſt eminent Peeres and Nobles of this Land, ſuddenly taken away, but by what ſtroke is not yet fully diſcovered, though greatly ſuſpected; as, the Marqueſſe of *Hamilton*, the Duke of *Richmond*, and the Lord *Belfaſt*, &c. all eminent Commonwealths men, fierce and furious warres alſo and rumours of warres, Nation againſt Nation, and Kingdome againſt Kingdome. And (as I toucht before) wee now ſee our too ſecure Kingdom muſt alſo ſhare in theſe common calamities, now fallen upon the earth,

The effects of the ſaid Comet, or blazing Star.

Death of great ones.

earth, England having ſinned, and done very fooliſhly, England muſt alſo come under the laſh of Gods juſtice and greatly incenſed indignation againſt it, as well as Germany, Rochell and Ireland.

Before I can leave the blazoning of this Blazing-ſtar, I muſt give the Reader one more remarkable note and obſervation on it. Namely, that at the firſt appearing of this Star, wee were all in peace, and (ſeeming) ſerene tranquility, but indeed (as was fore-mentioned) ſuch a peace as juſtly rendred us ſetled on the lees of carnall ſecurity. Even as if this Star had been ſent among us in ſpeciall to fore-warne us of our preſent too looſe ſecurity, and therefore future enſuing infelicity, if not ſpeedily prevented by true and unfained repentance. For, it firſt appeared, as I ſaid, the 18 of November, the day after the annuall memoriall of Queen *Elizabeths* (of ever moſt famous memory) moſt

A remarkable note on the riſing of the blazing ſtarre.

happy inauguration to the Crowne of England, the day when we began to enjoy the liberty of the Goſpel, and deliverance from that former moſt formidable yoke of Romiſh Egyptian bondage and ſlavery, under bloody Babyloniſh and terrible conſcience-curbing task-maſters; and which ſo bleſſed liberty, we have now in a good and great meaſure enjoyed, at leaſt, theſe threeſcore yeares. And this, I ſay, ſeemed moſt particularly to bee delineated out unto us, by this notable Comets appearing juſt on the next day to the 17 of November, as if the Lord would, thus, have expoſtulated with us. O England, ungratefull and unfruitfull England, thou haſt, now, theſe ſixty yeares by my free favour and bounty, enjoyed my Goſpel of pure peace, together with the ſweet and amiable peace of this my Goſpel, but haſt beene, all the while but little the better (if not far the woiſer) by it. Well, though I con-

confeſſe I know not what I could have done more for England, my choyce vine, my pleaſant plant, then I have done, having ſo hedged, digged and dreſſed it; yea, and watered it with the dewes and drops of heaven: and now that I expected it ſhould have brought me forth ſweet grapes of faith and pure obedience, it hath contrariwiſe brought forth the wilde grapes of ſin and rebellion; though, I ſay, it deſerves (like the fruitleſſe Fig-tree) to be cut down, and not ſuffered to encumber the ground any longer: yet, out of my meer mercy and indulgence to England, I will let it alone one yeare of patience more, and onely ſhake my rod over it, with this prodigious apparition, and celeſtiall ſigne of my juſt diſpleaſure, as a premonition thereof to move it to repentance, which if it cordially fall upon, well and good; if not, whereas, all this while, I have been ſeverely whipping and ſcourging other neighbour-nations, e-

Eſay 5. 1, 2, 3, &c.

Luke 13. 7.

ſpecially her ſiſter Ireland, to make England (if it might be) wiſe by others woes, my leaden-heeles of long-ſufferance, patience, and compaſſion, ſhall be found to have Iron-hands of wrath without remedy; and then I will doe my work, my ſtrange worke, and bring to paſſe my act, my ſtrange act; and when I begin, I will alſo make an end. The Lord, timely, open the eyes of Englands underſtanding, that ſhee may ſee (yet) in this her day, the things that concern her eternall peace, leſt, hereafter they bee everlaſtingly hid from her.

Eſay 28. 21. 1 Sam. 3. 12.

A ſecond warning-piece (worthy our ſerious notice) of Gods gracious longanimity and patient forbearance, toward us, notwithſtanding our pertinacious provocations, and refractory rebellions towards him, may be this. A prodigious-birth, and monſtrous Man-childe, borne in Old-bride-well, about October 3. 1633. having two heads, two hearts,

A man-Childe, born in old Bridewell precinct, having two distinct Heades, two Hearts, two armes & the Stump of another growing out from the back. Shewn to King Charles & ỹ Queen, Anno Dom: 1633 Buried October ỹ 3ᵈ.

BEhold, good Reader, here, a monſtrous birth,
To damp thy ſinnes delight, and marre ſuch mirth,
A Man-childe born in moſt prodigious ſort,
Which for undoubted truth thou mayſt report.
Two diſtinct heads it had, and like two hearts,
Two arms, whence grew a ſtump. In other parts
Like other children. What may this portend?
Sure monſtrous plagues doe monſtrous ſinnes attend.
The ſinnes of Heads, in government abus'd,
The ſinnes of hearts, opinions falſe infus'd,
And broacht abroad to raiſe up foes and factions,
And Armies and Armies to confound with fractions,
Diſ-joynted States (like ſtump-like Ireland)
Whiles brothers thus 'gainſt brothers lift their hand.
This (ſurely) God ſeemes hereby to foretell,
That having Plagues muſt hideous Sinnes expell.

hearts, two armes, and a ſtump, beſide. This childe was borne of poor parents, inhabitants in that precinct. Which foreſaid Birth, being ſo marvellous and prodigious a Monſter in nature, was carried and ſhewed to King *Charles* our Soveraigne, and his royall conſort, the Queen, who greatly aſtoniſht at the ſight thereof, moſt graciouſly and charitably ſent the poore woman, the mother of it, five pieces, to refreſh her in her preſent poverty and weakneſſe.

A monſtrous birth, a man-child born with two heads, 2 hearts, 2 two armes and a ſtump.

Shewn to King Charles and the Queen.

Now, whereas, peradventure, ſome may here object and ſay; Why doe you count this ſuch a wonder which is (as the Naturaliſts and Philoſophers affirme and write) but a deficiencie and weakneſſe of nature?

An Object.

Whereunto I anſwer, This is an objection indeed, but of a meere naturaliſt and carnall man, who is willing only to look upon externall and ſecondarie cauſes, not conſidering the wonders and operations of Gods hands. *David* could

Anſwer.

Pſal. 139. 14. could ſay, that a man in his ordinary, naturall, and well-compoſed generation, is fearfully and wonderfully made; how much more terribly and wonderfully, when the Lord is pleaſed to frame ſuch a fearfull and wonder-ſtriking birth in the womb of his creature, ſo contrary to nature? And did not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt himſelfe, the fountaine of wiſedome and underſtanding, (yea far more wiſe then all the Naturaliſts and Philoſophers that ever were or will be) tell his Diſciples, who curiouſly queſtioned the cauſe, why that Joh. 19. 3. man (mentioned in the Goſpel) that was borne blinde from his mothers wombe; was ſo made by God, that the Lords mighty power might be manifeſted in him? And although it cannot be denied but that ſometimes ſuch monſtrous births are produced by defect of nature: yet its as true that frequently the Lord is pleaſed to cauſe ſuch monſtrous productions from his crea-

creatures, as predictions and forerunners of ſome fearefull judgement to come for ſinne. For otherwiſe, God could have given power (as in an ordinary way he does) to have brought forth to perfection.

But tis confeſt clearly, by that wiſe and famous Hiſtorian *Ioſephus*, formentioned at the beginning of this Treatiſe, who there, brings in that ſtrange and unnaturall birth of the Cow which brought forth (in the Temple of Jeruſalem) a Lamb inſtead of a Calfe, and which he there introduceth as one of the fearfull forerunners and ſignes of Jeruſalems enſuing miſery and deſolation; to which prodigious birth, this alſo, me thinkes, may fitly be a paralell, and juſtly be taken for a fearfull prediction of wrath to come, if not prevented by timely repentance.

And why may wee not yet farther conſider, even with particular application, this monſtrous birth, to this effect:

That

That God, by theſe two heads, two hearts, two armes, and a ſtump of another in this child, might let us now ſee his haſtning judgements and wrath on our Kingdoms of England and Ireland, wherein hath beene too manifeſtly ſeen to our ſorrow, ſuch diviſions; by two heads, the King and this renowned Parliament, ſome ſiding with the one, and ſome with the other: by two hearts, Papiſts and Proteſtants, or Malignant and well affected Chriſtians, ſome ſtanding for Truth, and ſome for Errour; ſome for Chriſt, and ſome for Antichriſt; ſome for Goſpel and a holy Reformation, and ſome for beggarly Ceremonies and Romiſh traſh and trumpery; two armes or armies for juſt defence in England and Scotland, and a miſerable and monſtrous ſtump of an arme in lamentably torne and mangled Ireland. And this uſe, I remember our brethren in New England, not long ſince made of another moſt prodigious and

A particular application of this ſtrange birth to our ſtrange times.

and miſhapen and monſtrous birth, brought foorth by a Gentlewoman of that New Plantation, who had beene a maine fautrix, if not originall broacher of very many moſt wicked, dangerous, & damnable opinions in their Church: God having declared his high diſpleaſure therat, by her ſo fearfull monſtrous and miſ-ſhapen birth, which, as a godly Miniſter there related, had as many externall and corporall deformities in its body, as ſhe maintained diverſities of moſt dangerous opinions. Which was all of it, I ſay, teſtified for moſt true, by ſome of the moſt learned and godly Paſtours and people amongſt them.

A moſt prodigious and monſtrous birth alſo in New-England.

Againe, have we not had many moſt remarkable warnings and fearfull forerunners of Gods diſpleaſure againſt us for our ſinns and tranſgreſſions, by moſt hideous and horrour-ſtriking-thunder-claps, and ſpirit-affrighting-Lightnings, doing much and moſt fearfull hurt, burning,

Thunder and lightning.

ning, defacing and ſpoiling our very materiall Churches and houſes in this Kingdome, moſt manifeſtly giving us to underſtand that ſomething, ſurely, is much amiſſe even in our Churches and worſhip and ſervice of the Lord our God (as I ſhall afterward more particularly and truly ſhew) in our moſt ſumptuous and ſuperfluouſly huge built Churches and Cathedrall Minſters, indeed farre more like Heathen Temples then Chriſtian Churches. And as an undoubted teſtimony of Gods diſpleaſure heerein, take firſt that moſt memorable and terrible, yea never to bee forgotten example of Gods wrath & deep indignation manifeſted by thunder and lightning, againſt ſuperſtitious ſuperfluous and idolatrous impieties in our Churches of England, which God was pleaſed to manifeſt upon the Pariſh Church of *Withcombe* in Devonſhire, (beſides divers other Churches in other places, much about the ſame time alſo

Churches mightily defaced and deſtroyed by thunder and lightning.

Withcomb in Devonſhire a mighty faire Church.

alſo, which is the more remarkeable) being a very faire Church, and but then newly trimmed, having a very fayre Towre with great and ſmall pinnacles, and reported to be one of the faireſt and moſt famous Church ſteeples in all the Weſterne parts of England; which I have heere deſcribed and ſet foorth in this Figure and Emblem for the Readers better content and ſatisfaction.

Which ſaid faire Church and ſteeple was moſt fearfully and furiouſly aſſaulted with moſt hideous thunder and lightning on the 21. day of *October* 1638. (which alſo was ſo much the more admirable, being in the Winter ſeaſon) which was the Lords Day, and in the time of their Church Service or Evening Prayer (ſtill the more obſervable) in the midſt of the performance of which duties, I ſay, on a ſudden there was heard moſt fearfull & heart-damping claps of thunder, much like the roaring noiſe or ratling reports of great Canons,

October 21. 1638. being the Lords day. In the winter ſeaſon.

A most prodigious & fearefull storme of winde lightning & thunder, nightly defacing Withcomb-church in Devon. burning and slaying diverse men and women all this in service-time, on the Lords day Octob: 21. 1638

HEre, Reader, ope thine eyes and ears and heart,
Conſider what this figure doth impart.
Behold, and tremble to behold and ſee,
How Chriſt, Gods Lambe, a Lion fierce can be:
When Sin doth patience into paſſion turne,
And make ſweet favour, like fierce fury burne.
When Bethel is a baudie-Babel made,
God will his fair Jeruſalems invade.
When, for pure worſhip of his ſacred name,
We, Idol-Altars, Popiſh-Rites will frame:
O, how the jealouſie of God doth burn!
All Idol-worſhip, quite, to over-turne.
Shall England (thus) pretend a reformation,
And, yet, uphold Romiſh abomination?
Surely (as here) God will let England know,
If theſe continue, God will angry grow.

Canons, and musket ſhot diſcharged; upon which, preſently followed a moſt fearfull Fog, and almoſt palpable darkneſſe all over the Church, and a moſt ſtrong and almoſt ſtifling Stygian ſtink and loathſome ſmell of brimſtone, together with a moſt boyſterous and bluſtering blaſt of wind and clap of thunder, which ſtrucke in at the Northſide of the ſteeple or towre, and tearing through a ſtrong wall came into the Church through the higheſt window, and bare before it ſheere away, a great part thereof, and with a mighty power it alſo ſtrook away the Northſide wall of the Church, and violently battered and ſhook it very much, paſſing on toward the Pulpit, and in the way tooke with it the lime and ſand from off the wall, grating the wall much and mightily defacing it, it having been but lately new whited and trimmed, as aforeſaid. It tore away alſo moſt fiercely the ſide Deske from the Pulpit, colouring the

The ſtorm begun.

The fearfull effects of it.

The ſteeple torne.

The north ſide wall broken.

The pulpit ſtrangely defaced.

the pulpit it ſelfe of a black hew, and leaving it as moiſt as if it had been newly waſhed over with inke. In which time there was alſo a moſt terrible and heart-aſtoniſhing lightning, which did both mightily affright the people, and even ſcald their skin with the extreame heat thereof; inſomuch as the greateſt part of them fell proſtrate, ſome on their faces, and ſome on their knees, and ſome one upon another, ſcreeking and crying out in a moſt pittifull and patheticall manner.

A fearfull flaſh of lightning.

The Miniſters wife, there preſent, had her Ruffe and Linnen next her body, burnt off, and her body it ſelf grievouſly ſcorched. One Miſtreſſe *Ditford*, ſitting in the ſeat with her, had her Gowne, two Waſt-coats, and her linnen next her body alſo grievouſly ſcorched. Another woman frighted with this fearfull ſpectacle, running out of the Church, had her cloathes ſet on fire, her body ſcorched, her fleſh torne

The Miniſters wives caſe.

A Gentlewoman alſo ſitting with her.

A woman running out of the Church.

on her back in a moſt grievous manner,

A Gentleman ſlaine.

One Maſter *Hill*, a Gentleman had his head ſmitten againſt the wall, and died the very next day of it.

Sir Richard Reynolds his Warriners moſt fearfull death.

Sir *Richard Reynolds* his Warriner had his head cloven, his skull rent in three pieces, whereof two fell in the next ſeat, the other fell down in the ſeat where he ſate: his braines fell entirely whole into the next ſeat behinde him, his blood daſht againſt the wall; ſome of the skin of his head, fleſh and haire, to the quantity of an handfull, was carried into the Chancell, his body left in the ſeat, as though he had been alive, ſitting aſleep, and leaning on his elbow reſting on the desk of his Pew, with the fore-part of his head and face whole. O moſt terrible and fearfull power of the Lord!

Another man by him.

A man that ſate before him, in the ſame ſeat, was ſcalded and burnt all over on that ſide next the ſaid Warriner.

A third man moſt grievouſly ſlaine.

In the ſecond ſeat behinde the Warriner, a man was in a moſt grievous manner burnt

burnt and ſcalded all over his body, ſo as he was all over like raw fleſh, and lived in great miſery about a week after, and then died. A Dogge neere the Chancell doore, was fiercely whirled up three times, and the laſt time fell down dead. Some ſeats in the body of the Church, were torn up, and overwhelmed up-ſide-down; yet they that were in them had no harme, notwithſtanding that they were thereby throwne out of them into other ſeats foure or five pewes higher. About the number of eight boyes ſitting about the railes of the Communion Table (heere wee may obſerve what a ſuperſtitious Church it was, like, almoſt all the reſt of our Churches in theſe raiſerable daies) were all of them taken up by the violence of this ſo terrible a ſtorme, and throwne on heaps within the railes, but had no hurt at all. A beame was broken in the midſt, and fell downe between the Miniſter and his Clerke, but

A Dogge kild.

A ſtrange preſervation.

Eight Boyes at the rails of the Altar thrown on heaps on each other.

A beam fell down but hurt none.

neither of them hurt thereby. The Church was also very much defaced and torn in many parts of it, and a great stone neere the very foundation, was torne up and removed thence. Other stones were violently throwne out of the tower, as thick as if there had been an hundred men throwing them, some stones of them of such a weight and bigneſſe, as no one man was able to lift. One of the Pinacles of the Tower was tumbled downe into the Church. A man sitting on the Church-beere, at the lower end of the Church, had the said beere torne in pieces under him, and himself thrown into a seat by the wall, but had no other hurt. A great stone was throwne about an hundred yards from the Church, and sunke into the ground so deep and so fast, that it could hardly be seen afterward. A Bowling-alley also neere the Church-yard, was strangely turned into deep pits; and a Wine-Taverne nere the Church, had the

A foundation stone torn up.

Stones out of the Tower throwne downe thick.

A pinacle tumbled down.

A great stone thrown an hundred yards off.

A Bowling alley and a Tavern neere the Church defaced.

the ſide thereof next the Church torne up, and the top or covering broken and caried off, and one of the rafters broken into the ſaid houſe.

And was not heere a moſt terrible and almoſt an incredible print and impreſſion of Gods threatned wrath and indignation againſt both the internall and externall vanity and impiety of ſuch profuſe and ſuperfluous Church-buildings, vaine and needleſſe, I ſay, now under the Goſpel, though in the time of the Leviticall Law, moſt requiſite and lawfull in moſt gorgeous maner to be ſet out, as typifying Chriſt Jeſus in all his excellencies and graces; and therefore theſe fearefull examples may ſerve as a remarkable caution and forewarning of Gods diſpleaſure heerein. But becauſe tis likely, our ſuperſtitious Cathedraliſts will bee apt to object in their carnall incredulity, that one Swallow makes not a Summer, and ſo one ſingle teſtimony is not ſufficient to con-

Briefe notes on the premiſſes.

The Jews Temple under the Law moſt ſumptuous and why?

Ob. One Swallow makes not a ſummer.

firme so weighty a conclusion and inference as I would fain gather from these
Answ. fearefull premises. I shall therefore in the next place give the Reader other remarkable examples of Gods semblable undoubted displeasure with the vanity and impiety of our Churches and Church-government, and services too long exercised among us to the high indignation of the Lord, especially now
Prelaticall Church-government. of late, since our Prelats began so grossly to tyrannize over the consciences of Gods people) and then say, whether thou canst not easily be induced to beleeve with me, this truth, which I have hence collected, and which the Lord by these fearefull examples, seems most plainly to have indigitated and demonstrated to us. And therefore to cry out with the Prophet in holy admiration and trembling, Who would not feare
Jer. 10.7. thee, O King of Nations, to whom it belongeth justly to punish sinners?

In January also then next ensuing, there

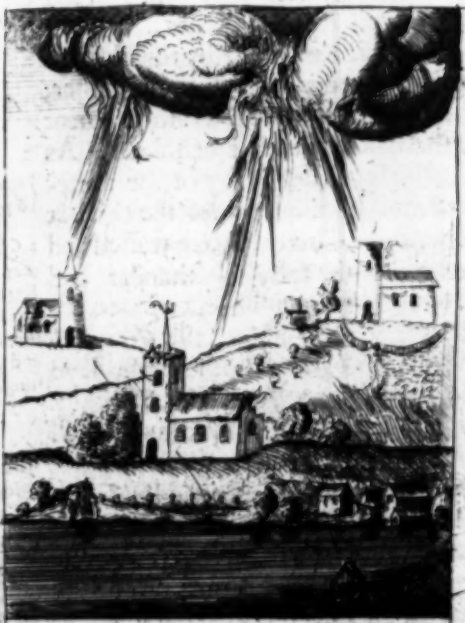
there was very great hurt done, in and upon divers other Churches, in other parts of this Kingdome, by thunder and lightning, and mighty ſtormy weather, to the great and terrible aſtoniſhment of the inhabitants and beholders. As namely upon the 14. day of the aforeſayd month, about five of the clock at night, three Churches were waſted and defaced with fearefull thunder and lightning, and moſt violent windes; the one was *Micham* in Kent, alſo *Greenhith* and *Stone-Church*, both in the ſayd County of Kent. And upon Whitſunday 1640. in the Pariſh Church of *S. Anthony* in Cornewall, great hurt was done by terrible thunder and lightning, the people being then in the Church at their Sabbath dayes exerciſes. As heer thou ſeeſt it ſummarily and briefly delineated in thoſe following Figures or Emblemes.

Janu. 14. 1639.

3. Churches in Kent defaced with thunder and lightening.

And Saint Anthonies in Cornwall, 1640

Now



3 or 4 churches more, as namely Milsam and Grenhith in Kent. also Stone-church, all fearefully defaced with lightning and thunder, the January following And St Anthonies Church in Cornwall, Anno Dom: 1640.

And, here, againe, that All may clearly ſee,
False-worſhip, and Idolatry to be
The ſin of England: God, in other places,
More Houſes of ſuch worſhip, much defaces,
With fearfull ſtorms, lightnings, fierce claps of thunder,
Churches and Steeples rends and cleaves aſunder.
Though many other ſins doe England ſtaine,
Yet, this, of all the reſt, is dy'd in graine.
Idolatry and Superſtition baſe,
The Lord will not endure in any caſe.
And therefore ſhewes, by ſo many examples,
With how great wrath under his feet he tramples
Such Romiſh-traſh, and all Wil-worſhip vaine,
And, only, will unmixed Truth maintaine.
Be warned, then, betimes, England take heed,
Leſt wrath, without redreſſe, doe make thee bleed.

More full observations on all these Church-ruines.

Now all these considered together, with the time of the yeere, the Winter season, and the day whereon they fell, the Lords day, and (that, which is so much the more remarkable) in the time of their Sabbath dayes duties; tell me, can any man be so Atheistically minded and blindly or obstinately opinionated as to thinke that these so fearfull and formidable affrightments immediately from heaven, can bee meerly casuall or contingent by naturall concurrences only, and not rather immediate demonstrations and fore-runners of Gods high indignation for the great sins and provocations of our Clergy and Prelaticall Church-government. Certainly it were meere madnesse, or at least grosse carnall security, if not diabolicall delusion, to say, or thinke otherwise. For, if we looke on our late most intolerable superstitious and idolatrous times, not silently-creeping, but audaciously running, and (with the Romish-whores unblush-

Whether they were naturally occasional or otherwise.

bluſhing face) breaking out upon us, and impudently and too frequently practiſed among us by croſſing and Jeſu-cringing, altar-worſhip, rayling in of our Communion-tables turned into altars, Popiſh, ſumptuous and ſuperſtitious adornation and bedawbing of Churches with crucifixes & other Popiſh pictures, apiſh geſtures, veſtures, and ſuch like beggarly-rudiments and ceremonies, as the Apoſtle cals them; making more, by farre, of the meere wals, and dead ſtones of their Churches, than of the living ſtones of Gods Houſe and Temple. What other thing could be diſcovered by all theſe, but a moſt diſloyall apoſtacy, and almoſt a generall backſliding and defection from our firſt love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and from his ſound faith, to Antichriſt, Arminianiſme, and Atheiſticall profaneneſſe, both in Prieſt and people. Gal. 4. 9. Col. 2. 20.

And may we not then juſtly conceive and beleeve that the Lord, by theſe ſo

fearfull,

fearfull, and I dare ſay unparallel'd examples of wrath on (even) theſe materiall Churches, might truly indigitate and point-out unto us his holy purpoſe to ruinate this Romiſh-rubbiſh, to purge his holy Temple and worſhip, from theſe out-ſide formalities and fopperies, and to ſet up and eſtabliſh a more pure and powerfull, a more precious and glorious internall, ſpirituall, ſimple, and plaine unmixed-worſhip to himſelfe, and ſuch faithfull and fruitfull worſhippers, as ſhould worſhip him in ſpirit and in truth, in plaine ſimplicity and ſingleneſſe of heart; for, ſuch worſhippers, now under the Goſpel, hath hee choſen to himſelf, as our Saviour Chriſt Jeſus himſelfe aſſures us, whoſe infallible heavenly authority I chooſe rather to beleeve, then the beſt and moſt reverend (pretended) antiquity of primitive Fathers, and humane authorities, ſo urgently and inſtantly preſſed upon us by our late Romiſh-hearted Prelates, and

Joh. 4.23.

Pon-

Pontifician Doctors whomſoever.

What a moſt notable warning-piece alſo did the Lord make viſible unto us by Sea, about the moneth of September, 1640. namely, that Spaniſh Fleet which came (without controule) moſt audaciouſly upon our Engliſh coaſts, with many and mighty Veſſels full fraught and furniſhed with armes, ammunition, and many thouſand Souldiers(almoſt ſuch another formidable and affrighting Armado, as that was in 1588.) thinking then alſo to have ſwallowed us up, and to have found us and our brethren of Scotland together by the eares, that ſo they might with the more eaſe have unreſiſtibly ſet firme footing, and ſecurely have landed on our Engliſh ſhore, and ſo have ſtept in betweene both parties, and have made up their mouthes with a fat and full prey of three rich and royall Diademes at once; which, indeed, hath beene the long expected prize of the Spaniards moſt

moſt greedy appetite and hungry hope to have made up his long dreamed of univerſall Monarchy; as here you ſee it ſet forth and deſcribed in this next Figure or Embleme.

But

A second Spanish-Armado, much like that in 1588. hovering about our English-Sea's neer Deale & Douer, hoping to have made England thier pray & to have found us fighting with our brethren of Scotland; but beaten back and destroyed by Van Trump and his Dutch Fleet An: Dom: 1642.

AND, here, another Warning-piece we had,
A 'righting Storme, by Sea, t'have made us sad,
Had not Heav'ns wisedome, power and providence
Prevented it, and beene our strong defence.
A Spanish Fleet, floating upon our Seas,
Hopefull to land upon our Land with ease;
To finde us fearlesse, or engag'd in fight,
With Scotland, through intestine deepe despite.
But, whiles they hovered about 'Deale and 'Dover,
Watching occasion us to triumph over,
Whiles we-our-selves dreadlesse of danger were,
So neare our ruine, yet, so void of feare,
The Lord a Fleet of 'Dutchmen to them sent,
To pay their pride, their mischiefe to prevent.
This Warning-piece we, therefore may admire,
Preserv'd thus strangely from destruction dire.

BRITISH MUSEUM

But it pleaſed the Lord to direct the Dutch Fleet, at that time abroad at Sea, under the command of *Van Tromp* their Admirall, to meet with them, and (before Deale and Dover) to fight with them for us, when wee little thought of fighting for our ſelves, though ready to be made a prey to this devouring Spaniſh-Leviathan. Here, I ſay alſo, did the Lord, by them, ring us ſuch a peale of thundring Canon, as it were knocking at our doores to awaken us out of our marvellous Lethargy of eaſe and carnall ſecurity, or of blockiſh ſtupidity, as might have beene thought ſufficient to have made us recollect our thoughts, open our eyes and looke about us, and ſee the hand of God lifted up againſt us, yet loath to let the ſtroke fall ſo heavily upon us, to our irrecoverable ruine and deſtruction, as our ſinnes moſt juſtly deſerved, had hee in his juſtice ſo dealt with us.

On Thurſday alſo, Auguſt 4. 1642.

about 5. of the clocke in the afternoone, at a Towne called Alborough in the County of Suffolke, there was heard in the ayre, and evidently ſeene, a mighty ſound of drummes beating very loud, after which was alſo heard at the ſame time, a long and fierce peale of ſmall ſhot, as of Muskets and ſuch like, and then as it were a diſcharging of great Ordnance in a pitcht field; all this continuing about an houre and a halfe, and then there was a mighty and terrible report or noiſe of them all together: At the ceaſing whereof a blacke ſtone was as it were ſhot out of the skye, being about eight inches long, and five or ſixe inches broad, and about two inches thicke, which was taken up by two men which ſtood by and heard the foreſaid noiſe, and the whiſtling of the ſtone over their head as it paſt by them (but they could not ſee it) they found it by meanes of a little dogge, who followed it by the ſent, and ran barking to and fro,

fro, till they following the dogge, were brought to the place where it lay, covered with earth and graſſe. The men that found it brought it to London, and preſented it to a Burgeſſe of Parliament, upon whoſe ground it was found, and by him was ſhewne to divers others. One Captaine *Johnſon*, and one Maſter *Thompſon*, men well knowne in thoſe parts of Suffolke, being at a Towne called Woodbridge, hearing of this marvellous noyſe toward Alborough, verily ſuppoſing that ſome enemy was landed, and had made ſome ſodaine onſet or invaſion upon the Town, took horſe and rode haſtily homeward, the rather bec uſe they heard of the battaile louder and louder, and being on their way neare Alborough, they met with the greateſt part of the townſmen, who were generally run out of their houſes, round about, much amazed with ſuch an uncouth noiſe of war. But after all this, there was, for certaine, ſodainly

Admirable sweet musicke heard plainly, after all that terrible noise

heard a most joyfull noyse of sweet musicke, and of sundry rare musicall instruments sounding in a most melodious manner, for a good space together, and at last it all concluded with a most harmonious noise, as it were of delicate ringing of well-tuned bels.

Now

A most terrible representation of a great fight in the Ayre at Alborough in Suffolk, drum's beating, Canons and Musket-shooting, a black stone shooting out from the clouds found by a dogg in the ground, but all, at last, ending with most melodious musick, and ringing of bells as in triumph of some victorie. Aug. 4. 1643.

OF all the Warning-Pieces to us sent,
See here a Master-piece of wonderment.
A mighty battell fought (as 'twere) in th'aire,
Which Alb'rough Townsmen mightily did feare:
For first, they heard Drummes beating loud alarms,
Great Canons shooting, as in fields of Armes,
Thick and quick vollies of small shot; likewise
A stone most black breaking forth from the skies,
Which whistling through the air, did pierce the ground,
And (by a Dogge) where it fell down, was found.
But suddenly this frighting feare was past,
And, by melodious musicke turnd at last
Into much joy and great alacrity,
Bells (as 'twere) ringing most harmoniously,
As if the Lord would hereby let us see
His gracious love at last to set us free
From all our fore-felt feares, and terrors great,
To crown us with a conquest most complete,
Shown in this figure Tragi-comicall:
Heav'n say Amen to this. So pray we all.

Now this Tragi-Comicall Warning-piece (for ſo methinkes I may fitly call it) which we have here deſcribed and ſet forth, as well as a figure and expreſſion of that nature might be; beginning ſo terribly, and concluding ſo ſweetly, did far tranſcend, in prognoſticating comfort, in the iſſue, all the fore-mentioned marvellous prodigies and predictions, either in Jeruſalem, Germany, or elſewhere among us; and may therefore (ſurely) ſerve as a ſoveraigne antidote againſt our too much fainting and affrighting feares. The Lord our good God ſeeming hereby to foreſhew us (as bleſſed Mr. *Brightman* alſo, that famous Divine, and faithfull ſervant of the Lord, in his moſt bright and learned revelation of the Revelations of Saint *John*, hath even prophetically written) that Englands terrible ſtorme of woes and warres now begun in it, by Papiſts, Atheiſts, and profane Malignants, whom God hath ſtirred up to diſturb

its

its abused peace and plenty, and as a just punishment of Englands great sins and enormities, though for a while it may seeme sharp, yet shall be short, and prove sweet in the issue, fanning away the chaffe, and burning up the drosse thereof, and making way for a glorious peace and perfect reformation, and for the setting up of Christs Throne, and advancing of his Scepter, in the power and purity of holy ordinances, in the issue and conclusion.

It is our part therefore, in faith, patience, and prayer, to possesse our souls, and to wait on the Lord for the happy performance of the same in his due time, and by that way which is best pleasing to his most wise providence. And the Lord in mercy perfect our expectation thereof in his appointed season. Amen and Amen.

I have made no mention all the while, of the many strange, fearfull, and unaccustomed Eclipses of the Sunne and Moone,

Moone, which have been seen from yeare to yeare both in other parts, and also in our owne English Horizon; which also by the judgement of the best Astrologers and Mathematicians, have and doe prognosticate and declare unto us, many notable changes and overtures of States and Kingdoms; as also that late and memorable conjunction of *Saturne* and *Iupiter* among us in February last, 1643. which hath been written of long before it fell out; and which (with all the rest) doth prognosticate and demonstrate unto us (as so many Warning-pieces) the great alteration and vicissitude of Kingdoms, Countreyes, times and things in Church and State; especially, I say, this late and great conjunction of those two celestiall Planets as Mr. *Booker* in his Prognostication for this instant yeare 1643. doth most notably declare and manifest unto us.

But of these, and some other such like

like ſtrange apparitions in the aire; I ſhall deſire (with wiſe King *Solomon*) all my Chriſtian brethren and friends) to take holy and wholſome counſell which the Spirit of God prompts the children of wiſedome to embrace and follow, *viz.* A prudent man fore-ſees the evill (or approaching ſtorme) and hideth himſelf from it. And what better, nay what ſo ſafe a hiding-place as the clifts and holes of the Rocks, even the wounds of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, that immoveable and everlaſting Rock of our Salvation, and under the holy and heavenly wings of the Sunne of Righteouſneſſe; where onely (as the Prophet ſayes) is true and infallible Soule-healing comfort indeed, to all truly penitent, and conſcience-wounded ſinners, who with godly ſorrow, and unfained repentance and reformation, by faith in prayer, ſeeke and ſue unto him; which, the Lord give us all wiſedome and grace ſo to doe. Amen.

FINIS.